

they travel to a fundraising event, in Hollywood or San Francisco or Florida, for another Senator, and they could receive reimbursement for lodging—a clear inconsistency. We cannot do it for charity; but we can do it for politics.

Some suggest that politics is our business and that is why we should be allowed to continue to do it. But charity is also a worthy cause. Every Senator has, at one time or another, made a campaign appearance for his party or another member of his party. But the Senate now has created a system where politicians can travel all over this country attending political fundraisers and be reimbursed for travel and lodging but cannot be reimbursed for participating in charity events. This means the Senator can accept travel, lodging and dinner in some plush spot, elbow to elbow, on occasion, perhaps, with lobbyists, if he or she is raising money for a political group but cannot be reimbursed for participation in a charity event.

The source of funds for both charity and political events is often the same, donations of lobbyists and political action committees. The irony is that inside the beltway, charities still will be able to encourage the participation of business executives with the presence of Senators as a lure, but the charities in the distant States such as mine, in Alaska, will be shut out of the means to raise funds for worthy causes such as breast cancer detection screening.

Last year my wife, Nancy, and I were the honorary chairs of a charity fishing tournament held outside Ketchikan, AK. The tournament raised \$150,000 for the Breast Cancer Detection Center of Fairbanks. Money for the center was used to pay for a new mammography machine. The center, founded in 1976 by my wife and a group of Fairbanks women, provides free or reduced-cost breast cancer examination for about 2,200 women a year on average. Over the years, women from 81 Alaska villages have benefited from these tests.

This year, we proceeded with a second event at a place called Waterfall, near Ketchikan. We raised approximately \$210,000 and were able to give the Breast Cancer Detection Center of Alaska \$200,000 to allow them to order a mobile mammogram unit, which will be traversing the highways of Alaska next spring. It will be able to be utilized on the ferry systems and by barge systems and will be brought into the remote villages. This is a van, equipped with a mammography machine. It will also be able to be transported by the Air National Guard into some of the 220 rural villages in my State.

This unit is going to be vital to preserve the health of Alaska's women, including many Native women. I might add, the State's breast cancer mortality is the second highest in the Nation. One in eight Alaska women will develop breast cancer, with about 50 a year dying from that disease. Breast cancer screening can reduce this rate by some 30 percent.

My clear preference would have been to allow Senators to continue to come to this charity event, events approved previously by the Senate Ethics Committee to guarantee that they were legitimate charities. It seems to me, when Congress attacks charity events while leaving big loopholes for political travel, it simply puts us all in the bull's eye, furthering the public's growing skepticism toward public officials.

The gift rule and related lobbying reform legislation that the Senate has approved overall are certainly good steps to restore public confidence in the Senate and Congress. But why shoot down legitimate charities? Mr. President, that is just what we have done.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

I thank my colleague for allowing me this extra time.

TRIBUTE TO FAYE BROWN

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to commend and congratulate Faye Brown, who will be retiring from the bankruptcy administrator's office in Birmingham at the end of this month. She has been a fixture at the bankruptcy court and administrator's office for many years.

Faye graduated from Dale County High School in Ozark, AL; in 1950 and attended Howard College, now Samford University, graduating in 1954. From 1966 to 1971, she served as the personal secretary to Judge Robert S. Vance. In 1972, she was appointed deputy clerk for the bankruptcy court.

From 1979 to 1985, Faye was the secretary to Judge Stephen B. Coleman, Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Alabama. In 1985, after Judge Coleman's retirement, she became the asset closing clerk for the bankruptcy clerk's office, serving there for the next 7 years. In 1992, she obtained her current position and the one from which she is retiring this month, that of bankruptcy analyst.

Faye Brown has done an outstanding job over the many years of her career. In many ways, she is the institutional memory of her office, and knows the in's and out's of the bankruptcy court as well as anyone, and her expertise and dedication will be sorely missed. I congratulate her for a job well done and wish her all the best for a long, healthy, and happy retirement. It is surely well-earned.

POW-MIA RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, on Friday, I joined with the Members of this body, and with all the citizens of our Nation, in commemorating the American service members who are missing in action and whose fates yet remain unknown.

Our Nation honored those who are missing, both for their service and for their sacrifice.

We acknowledged the shared loss inflicted upon all of us when young men

and women are sent to war and do not return to us. We expressed our understanding of the terrible frustration, and, yes, even the anger, energized in us by the fact that the fates of those American service members remain unknown.

We restated our sacred obligation to take every reasonable step to obtain the fullest possible accounting for those still missing.

We endorsed anew our national commitment to recover and identify the remains of the honored dead.

Yes, it is so important to honor our missing service members. And it is necessary to ever remember our obligations, both to them and to their families.

Yet it is also important to acknowledge that there are practical and realistic limits to what can ever be learned. There are mysteries that will remain forever unsolved in this world.

We do our Nation's service members no justice if we fail to take every single reasonable step to recover them when they are lost from our midst. But we do them no honor—yes, we even dishonor them—if we are to allow their loss to become an albatross forever about the necks of our caring countrymen.

Mr. President, Friday our Nation paused to commemorate our missing in action, including members of my own family in World War II. Today, and every day, we must remember their service and their sacrifice. And today, and every day, our Nation can continue to honor them by ensuring that America remains wholly committed, at home and abroad, to the freedoms they fought to preserve forever.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the impression will not go away: The \$4.9 trillion Federal debt stands today as a sort of grotesque parallel to television's energizer bunny that appears and appears and appears in precisely the same way that the Federal debt keeps going up and up and up.

Politicians like to talk a good game—and "talk" is the operative word—about reducing the Federal deficit and bringing the Federal debt under control. But watch how they vote. Control, Mr. President. As of Friday, September 15, at the close of business, the total Federal debt stood at exactly \$4,962,989,568,088.23 or \$18,839.59 per man, woman, child on a per capita basis. *Res ipsa loquitur*.

Some control, isn't it?

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, is the lead time reserved?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

TRIBUTE TO RUTH ANN KOMAREK

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a valued member of my staff whose length of service to me

and the people of Kansas is nothing short of remarkable. Ruth Ann Komarek has just completed her 30th year of working for me. That is three, zero, Mr. President.

A native of Ellinwood, KS, Ruth Ann came to my office from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1965, while I was still serving in the House of Representatives. She made the transition with me to the Senate in 1968, and she has been hard at work ever since.

Ruth Ann serves as my office manager and supervisor of my mail operation, a mammoth task to say the least. Virtually every letter, fax, postcard, and package that comes into my office passes through her hands. That represents thousands upon thousands of pieces of correspondence every week. She gets each one where it needs to go and tries to make sure that every Kansan who writes to me gets a timely response.

Ruth Ann also spends a lot of time keeping the rest of the staff—especially the interns—in line. New staffers learn that her gruff exterior hides a heart of gold and a great sense of humor, but after she has laid down the law and made them earn their way.

I am proud to recognize Ruth Ann Komarek for all her hard work for me, the Senate, and for Kansas. I look forward to her continued service in the coming years.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to commend my colleague from New Hampshire, Senator JUDD GREGG, for the Medicare Improvement and Choice Care Provision Act which he introduced last week.

The Medicare Program has received a great deal of attention in the last year, particularly since early April when the Medicare trustees report stated that the Medicare Program will become insolvent in just 7 years.

Mr. President, Senator GREGG and all Republicans took this report very seriously. But, as anyone who has worked on this issue knows, to ensure the solvency of this program is going to require a great deal of commitment on the part of Congress and the administration.

Our goal is very simple—to preserve, strengthen, and protect the Medicare Program. Today 37 million disabled and elderly Americans rely on Medicare for their health care. For their sake and for the millions of Americans who will rely on this program in the future, we need to take action.

And that is exactly what Senator GREGG has done. The bill that he has introduced not only preserves and protects the current Medicare Program, it also strengthens the program to move it successfully into the 21st century.

Mr. President, as I have said many times in this Chamber, the United States has the best health care system in the world. There is no other nation that compares to the quality of care delivered by our providers, our technology, and our innovation. Although Medicare has provided invaluable

health care services to millions and millions of Americans, in some areas it has not kept pace with many of the advances in health care delivery enjoyed by the private sector.

The bill introduced by Senator GREGG restructures Medicare so that its beneficiaries receive the same range of choices and possibilities that those with private insurance receive today. At the same time, it leaves traditional Medicare completely in place for those Medicare beneficiaries who are happy with the care and services they receive today.

Mr. President, Senator GREGG deserves a great deal of credit for the leadership he has demonstrated on this very complex issue. As Congress is about to begin a very serious debate on Medicare reform in the coming weeks, the work of Senator GREGG will no doubt be an invaluable benefit.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business, extended, is now closed.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of the order, the hour of 10 o'clock having arrived and passed, the Senate will now proceed to consideration of H.R. 1976, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1976) making appropriations for agriculture, rural development, Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Appropriations, with amendments; as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in *italic*.)

H.R. 1976

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, and not to exceed \$75,000 for employment under 5 U.S.C. 3109, **[\$10,227,000]** *\$12,801,000*, of which **[\$7,500,000]** *\$10,000,000*, to remain available until expended,

shall be available for InfoShare: *Provided*, That not to exceed \$11,000 of this amount, along with any unobligated balances of representation funds in the Foreign Agricultural Service shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary.

EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS

CHIEF ECONOMIST

For necessary expenses of the Chief Economist, including economic analysis, risk assessment, cost benefit analysis, and the functions of the World Agricultural Outlook Board, as authorized by the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1622g), and including employment pursuant to the second sentence of the section 706(a) of the Organic Act of 1944 (7 U.S.C. 2225), of which not to exceed \$5,000 is for employment under 5 U.S.C. 3109, **[\$3,948,000]** *\$3,814,000*.

NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION

For necessary expenses of the National Appeals Division, including employment pursuant to the second sentence of section 706(a) of the Organic Act of 1944 (7 U.S.C. 2225), of which not to exceed \$25,000 is for employment under 5 U.S.C. 3109, **\$11,846,000**.

OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, including employment pursuant to the second sentence of section 706(a) of the Organic Act of 1944 (7 U.S.C. 2225), of which not to exceed \$5,000 is for employment under 5 U.S.C. 3109, **\$5,899,000**.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, including employment pursuant to the second sentence of section 706(a) of the Organic Act of 1944 (7 U.S.C. 2225), of which not to exceed \$10,000 is for employment under 5 U.S.C. 3109, **\$4,133,000**: *Provided*, That the Chief Financial Officer shall reinstate and market cross-servicing activities of the National Finance Center: *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act shall be used to obtain, modify, re-engineer, license, operate, implement, or expand commercial off-the-shelf financial management software systems or existing commercial off-the-shelf system financial management contracts, beyond general ledger systems and accounting support software, at the National Finance Center until thirty legislative days after the Secretary of Agriculture submits to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations a complete and thorough cost-benefit analysis and a certification by the Secretary of Agriculture that this analysis provides a detailed and accurate cost-benefit analysis comparison between obtaining or expanding commercial off-the-shelf software systems and conducting identical or comparable software systems acquisitions, re-engineering, or modifications in-house.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

For necessary salaries and expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration to carry out the programs funded in this Act, **\$596,000**.

AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES AND RENTAL PAYMENTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For payment of space rental and related costs pursuant to Public Law 92-313, including authorities pursuant to the 1984 delegation of authority from the Administrator of General Services to the Department of Agriculture under 40 U.S.C. 486, for programs and activities of the Department which are included in this Act, **\$110,187,000**, of which